

## ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATIONS

St. Timothy Lutheran Church recently celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2002 shortly after the building underwent an extensive renovation. As a community church with a growing membership, its vision is to move the Christian church into the 21st century while maintaining the essentials of biblical Christian doctrine. Sunday Worship at St. Timothy includes praise and worship led by the Praise Band and Worship Choir as well as traditional hymns. Bible Fellowship for adults and Sunday School for children and youth take place each Sunday at 9:15 am with Sunday Worship at 10:15 am. Pastor Ed Matthew's vision for ministering in the Fox Chase/ Rockledge Community is to bring people into their own relationship with Christ. "I want people to know that they matter to God, that no matter what our past is, God reaches out to us to love us. We all need to come just as we are....to experience the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and be changed forever." For more information, call 215-745-4453 or visit [www.sttimspilly.com](http://www.sttimspilly.com)

The Delaware Valley Opera Company (originally incorporated as the Delaware Valley Lyric Opera Guild) was started in 1979. The intention of its founders was to offer a stepping stone for singers, providing training and education through exposure to all facets of operatic production, and performance opportunities in a variety of operas. During the first year, two operas and a concert were produced at various Center City locations while a permanent space was sought.

In 1981, the Company discovered the Hermitage Mansion, one of Philadelphia's historic Fairmount Park homes, and began to lease it from the City. A year later, an outdoor stage was built in the natural amphitheater behind the Mansion and became the Paul D. Osimo Theatre. The Mansion serves also as the Company's administrative base, rehearsal space, costume and scenery storage site, and the location for its Winter Concert Series in the living room.

The primary focus of the Company is its Summer Festival - three operatic productions in June, July and August in the Osimo Theatre. During its 25 years of existence, the Company has performed over 100 performances and presented more than 52 operas. For more information, call 215-725-4171 or visit [www.dvopera.org](http://www.dvopera.org)

The Independence Sinfonia, now in its ninth season, is comprised of talented volunteers from the Delaware Valley. Our players range in age from students to retirees, but they are all united in their love for the performance of fine literature for chamber orchestra. A self-governing community organization, the Independence Sinfonia welcomes your support as volunteers and donors in the furtherance of our artistic mission.

For more information, call 215-836-2240 or visit [www.independencesinfonia.com](http://www.independencesinfonia.com)

## a Community Christmas Celebration

presented by

St. Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church

# AMAHN

And the  
Night Visitors  
BY  
Gian-Carlo Menotti



Fully staged & costumed, with orchestra

►A collaboration of

Delaware Valley Opera Company  
and Independence Sinfonia

Gabriel Gordon, conductor

►Special Holiday Music

with TODD THOMAS, Baritone

John Richardson, organ and piano

TWO PERFORMANCES!! 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM

►Sunday, November 27, 2005◀

with all our best wishes to you and yours

for a happy holiday season and a blessed 2006!

# a Community Christmas Celebration

presented by

St. Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 27, 2005

3:00 and 7:00 PM

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## Favorite Holiday Selections

Todd Thomas, baritone

John Richardson, piano and organ

## Amahl and the Night Visitors

Music and libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti

*Performed by arrangement with G. Schirmer, Inc.,*

*publisher and copyright holder*

Delaware Valley Opera Company

Independence Sinfonia

Gabriel Gordon, Music Director

## Christmas Carol Singalong

led by Mr. Thomas and Mr. Richardson

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with all our best wishes to you and yours

for a happy holiday season and a blessed 2006!

## Independence Sinfonia

Gabriel Gordon, Music Director



### First Violin

William Phillips, Concertmaster

Justine Lamb-Budge

### Second Violin

Kimberley Dolan

Amanda Godschall

### Viola

Margot Cohn

Jeffrey Bradbury

### Violoncello

Julie Wiberg

Anthony Gizzi

### Double Bass

Heather Dickson

### Flute/Piccolo

Anders Hansen

### Oboe

Forrest Rowland

Lynda Cantor

### Clarinet

William Fullard

### Bassoon

Judith Frank

### French Horn

Kimberly Newell

### Trumpet

James Edwards

### Harp

Madeline Blood

### Percussion

William Priebe

*Acknowledgements*

Special Thanks to...

**Richard Soltan**

*whose generosity made these performances possible*

**George and Kathy Acker**

**The Christmas Revels**

**The Delaware Valley Opera Company**

**Teresa B. Desiato**

**Jack and Judy Keisler**

**Phil and Debra Magee**

**Larry Martino**

**Christine Martino**

**Edward Matthews and family**

**Forrest Rowland and the Independence Sinfonia**

**Temple University Opera Department**

**St. Timothy Lutheran Church**

**Todd Thomas** has performed baritone roles for opera companies in Europe and throughout the United States. He has just returned from New York City Opera after 6 triumphant performances as Baron Scarpia in their highly acclaimed production of Puccini's *Tosca*. Previously for Sarasota Opera, he sang Scarpia in *Tosca*, the title role in *Macbeth*, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the title roles in *Falstaff* and *Nabucco* and appeared as Jack Rance in *La fanciulla del West*. This season he made his New York City Opera debut as Sonora in *La fanciulla del West*. Recently, Mr. Thomas repeated his *Macbeth* for Syracuse Opera and was Seattle Opera's *Falstaff*. Other roles include Germont in *La Traviata*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Count DiLuna in *Il Trovatore*, Amonasro in *Aida*, Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*. In addition to his international appearances in Italy, France, Switzerland, Holland and a four-year engagement in Germany as Principal Baritone at the Stadttheater Gießen, he has performed with the Opera Orchestra of New York, Opera Columbus, Lake George Opera and Opera Company of Philadelphia.

Since winning Second Prize in 1996 and First Prize in 1997 in the Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists Scholarship Competition, **John Richardson** has earned national recognition for his mature artistry as an organist and church musician.. He made his concert debut at the world renowned concert organ in Spivey Hall, Clayton College and State University in Morrow, Georgia. He there had the privilege of studying under Virgil Fox's chosen student, Richard Morris. Mr. Richardson is a recent graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with John Weaver. He is currently Director of Music and Organist at the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia and an assistant to Peter Conte, Wanamaker Grand Court Organist, Philadelphia, the world's largest operational organ, consisting of over 28,000 pipes! Mr. Richardson began playing the piano at the early age of three. He was the organist at his father's church at age 8 and formally studied organ at the age of sixteen under the instruction of Marie Johnson in his hometown of Lakeland, Florida. He has assisted and directed church music programs and concertized in numerous cities across the United States. A talented improviser, instructor, conductor, counter-tenor and piano/organ tuner, he delights in performing varied programs of musical rarities.

## The Cast

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Amahl, a young shepherd boy.....Elizabeth Oliver  
 His Mother.....Lisa Helmel Thomas  
 King Kaspar.....Timothy Oliver  
 King Melchior.....Jeffrey U. Chapman  
 King Balthazar.....Milo Morris  
 The Page.....Raja Bhavesh Vaidya  
 Shepherds  
 .....Sam Allen  
 .....Emily Brown  
 .....Ed Coverdale  
 .....Elie Dworkin  
 .....Cimarron Frazier  
 .....Rick Gehret  
 .....Mark Horwedell  
 .....Pam MacDonald  
 .....Mark Rohlf  
 .....Robyn Slough  
 .....Madeline Smith



**Use of cell phones, pagers, and flash photography  
 is NOT permitted during the performance.**

## Behind the Scenes

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Stage Direction .....Connie J. Koppe  
 Set Design.....Joyce C. Brommer, Connie J. Koppe  
 Musical Preparation.....John Dulik, Gabriel Gordon  
 Pianist.....John Dulik  
 Producer/ Assistant Director.....Joyce C. Brommer  
 Stage Management, Lighting.....Jack Keisler  
 Set Construction.....Joyce C. Brommer, Mark Horwedel,  
 .....Jack Keisler, Frank Malley  
 Costumes.....Amy Chmielewski  
 Props.....Kathy Horwedel, Judy Keisler  
 Program/ Publicity.....Lisa Thomas  
 Hospitality.....Phil and Debbie Magee, Larry Martino, Edward Matthews



### About our costume designer

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Amy Chmielewski, Resident Costume designer, is extremely happy to have completed her second season of working with DVOC. Her previous design credits include *Faust*, *Marriage of Figaro*, *Tosca*, *Falstaff*, *The Elixir of Love* and *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with DVOC and *Catalpa* for the Lantern Theatre Company. Her Assistant Designer credits include *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata* with the Center City Opera Theatre and *Secrets of NIMH*, *Pagliacci*, and *Gianni Schicchi* for OperaDelaware. Her Philadelphia Fringe Festival debut as Costume Coordinator Extraordinaire for *Balm in Gilead*, directed by Sara Pauly, received rave reviews. Amy looks forward to graduate work in Costume Design.

## Who's Who (continued)

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**Milo Morris (King Balthazar)** With a voice described as "robust" by the *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*, Milo Morris is a solid and versatile performer. Originally from Boston and now living in Philadelphia, Milo has been a crowdpleaser for audiences throughout the Eastern U.S., bringing roles to life for Opera Delaware, New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players, and Opera Memphis. Milo has also appeared as a guest artist at the University of Maine at Farmington, Philadelphia Biblical University, and Rowan University. Recent interpretations have included the roles of Black Buffalo and the Bear in Michael Ching's *Corps of Discovery*, and Wurm in *Luisa Miller*. His latest triumph with the Delaware Valley Opera was last summer as Dr. Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love*.

**Raja Bhavesh Vaidya (The Page)** made his foray into music theater and opera over the past several years. He has sung choral music at the Mann Music Center, Academy of Music, the Kimmel Center, Saratoga Performing Arts Center in New York, and numerous other local venues and has moved into operatic roles. Past roles include Fiorello in *The Barber of Seville*, the Page/King Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and Wagner in *Faust*. He has been teaching Martial Arts for 20 years as head instructor both at a school and through private instruction. Vaidya is currently working on his Master's thesis in Biomedical Chemistry at Thomas Jefferson University. He thanks the entire cast for doing a great job and for the support of his family and voice teacher, Sandy Day. "There are still those people in the world who have been denied the gift of speech yet blessed with the gift of song."

## The Story

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Amahl, a shepherd, tries to tell his mother about what he has seen outside; an enormous star with a long tail. His mother, used to his habitual lying, grows angry; she is even angrier when Amahl tells her that at the door are three kings coming to visit them. The kings enter and tell the two peasants that they have come to find a king, and they show the rich gifts they have brought him. While Amahl's mother is out gathering the neighbors, Amahl asks the kings questions about their lives. The mother returns, and the villagers present their gifts to the visitors. That night, Amahl's mother tries to steal some of the kings' gold to use to help her child; she is caught, and when the kings offer to let her keep the gold, explaining that the king they seek will need nothing but love to rule his kingdom, she returns it. Amahl offers his crutch as an additional gift, and suddenly finds that he can walk. He leaves with the kings to pay homage to the child who has healed him.



## About the Opera

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*Amahl and the Night Visitors* was the first opera ever written for American television. The head of NBC's Opera Company commissioned Menotti to write an opera. The composer at first seemed disinterested in the idea and it lay dormant for several years. A visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art brought inspiration. Menotti was deeply impressed by *The Adoration of the Magi* by Flemish artist Hieronymus Bosch. He began the opera only weeks before the scheduled broadcast on Christmas Eve 1951, and rehearsals started before the score was finished. The premiere was a great success and it was rebroadcast on Christmas Eve for years to follow.

## Who's Who in the Cast...

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**Elizabeth Oliver (Amahl)** Elizabeth Oliver, a lyric coloratura soprano, has performed a variety of roles to great success, including Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Josephine in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Frasquita in *Carmen*, Blonde in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and Annina in *La Traviata*. This is her fourth year singing Amahl in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. An Indiana University graduate, she has performed with the Old York Road Symphony Orchestra, the Independence Sinfonia, the West Jersey Chamber Orchestra, and is a member of the Philadelphia Singers. In addition to her other accomplishments Ms. Oliver recently co-produced Mozart's *Bastien and Bastienne* which she starred in, costumed, and directed.

**Lisa Helmel Thomas (The Mother)** has sung and understudied over 25 roles with companies including Opera Company of Philadelphia, OperaDelaware, Opera/Columbus, Sarasota Opera, Pennsylvania Opera Theater, American Music Theater Festival and Staddtheater Giessen, Germany. She made her DVOC debut in 2001 as Mimi in *La Boheme*, and went on to sing Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Lady Macbeth, the Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, the title role in *Tosca*, and most recently, Alice Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*. A graduate of Oberlin Conservatory, she holds a Masters in Opera degree from the Curtis Institute of Music. Now in her sixth year on the voice faculty at Philadelphia's Settlement Music School, Lisa is also Director of Music Ministries at St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Fox Chase. She performs in concert with the Philadelphia Singers, Ocean City Pops Orchestra, Independence Sinfonia, and Opera Company of Philadelphia.

## Who's Who (continued)

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**Timothy Oliver (King Kaspar)** In Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, his "lyric tenor soared as he performed the role of the love-struck Count Almaviva," wrote a critic for the Lancaster Intelligencer. "His light tenor voice grew in strength and warmth," wrote another of his Tamino in Mozart's *Die Zauberfloete*. He has been featured by the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, the Old York Road Symphony, the West Jersey Chamber Orchestra, the Independence Sinfonia, the Lancaster Opera Company, Trinity Center Opera, and made his Kimmel Center debut this year in Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Mr. Oliver holds a B.A. in Music from Lycoming College and is the Logistical Coordinator at Cunningham Piano Company, an internationally known piano restoration facility. Most recently, Mr. Oliver sang the roles of Gastone in *La Traviata* and Bardolph in *Falstaff* with the DVOC this past summer.

**Jeffrey U. Chapman (King Melchior)** made his DVOC debut as Ford in *Falstaff* this past summer. He went on to sing the role of Belcore in *The Elixir of Love* in the same season, having recently performed the role in a student performance with the Sarasota Opera. He resides in Wilmington, Delaware where he sang the roles of The Baron in *La Traviata*, Fiorello in *The Barber of Seville*, Montano in *Otello*, and The Imperial Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly* with OperaDelaware. Last year Mr. Chapman toured with the internationally recognized Gilbert and Sullivan company Opera A La Carte in *The Pirates of Penzance* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. This past season, he performed the role of Samuel in *The Pirates of Penzance* with the Gulf Coast Symphony of Fort Meyers, Florida. Last month Mr. Chapman sang the Marquis D'Obigny in *The Center City Opera Company's* production of *La Traviata* at the Kimmel Center. This fall, Mr. Chapman began his first season as a chorister with the Opera Company of Philadelphia.



### Upcoming Events

*Amahl and the Night Visitors-*

December 3 - 8 PM - December 4 - 3 PM

Hermitage Mansion

Tickets: \$12/members, seniors & students (with ID) \$15/non-members

### 2006 Summer Festival

*at the Paul D. Osimo Theater*

▶ *La Rondine* by Giacomo Puccini (Sung in Italian)

June 24, 29, and July 1, 2006

▶ *Così fan Tutte* by W.A. Mozart (sung in English)

July 15, 20, and 22, 2006

▶ *Carmen* by Georges Bizet (sung in French)

August 5, 10, and 12, 2006

for more information call 215-725-4171 or visit [www.dvopera.org](http://www.dvopera.org)

St. Timothy Lutheran Church  
a community church

presnets  
its annual

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday, December 3, 2005

10 am - 2 pm



- Handmade Items
- Christmas Crafts
- Attic Treasures
- Food items for sale
  - Bake Sale
- Cemetery greens

## About the Directors

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**Joyce C. Brommer (Producer/Assistant Director)**, a native of Roxborough, is a professional educator. She has taught both Health / Physical Education and Music in public and private schools, K-12. A lifelong stint as a church musician has honed her specialties of Sacred Choral Music and English Handbells. She has been involved with DVOC since 1999 and serves as a board member, director, assistant director, chorus alto/offstage conductor, set painter/constructor, grant writer and publicity artist. She would like to thank DVOC for providing an outlet that utilizes her talents while allowing her to discover and develop new ones.

**Gabriel Gordon (Conductor, Music Director)** is the Music Director of several Youth, Community, and Professional orchestras in the Tri-state area, including the Greater Newark Youth Orchestra, The Old York Road Symphony, and The Independence Sinfonia. Mr. Gordon is also a cover conductor for the Manhattan School of Music, and is the Assistant Director of the Strings International Music Festival featuring members of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Reviews have been unanimously positive, as Classical New Jersey and many others say, "Watching and listening to the maestro lead the orchestra is a treat in itself. Every gesture has a clear purpose, is significantly nuanced and is explicitly observed by the musicians."

As one of the founding members of the DaPonte String Quartet, he spent ten years honing his musical craft in the art of Chamber Music. "I am a much better conductor for having spent those years in a string quartet. Rather than just beating time and giving orders, I feel a conductor is much more like a chamber music partner with the orchestra. This creates an amazing connection between the conductor and the players." New Jersey's Star Ledger confirms this by writing, "Mr.

## About the Directors (continued)

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Gordon has a wonderful rapport with his musicians." In response to the events of September 11, 2001, Mr. Gordon formed an orchestra within two weeks time to benefit the Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. The performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was rehearsed in one day, and the concert was described as "Incredibly moving." The concert raised over thirty thousand dollars, and everyone associated still speaks of it as a highlight of their careers.

**Connie J. Koppe (Stage Director)** began directing operas 6 years ago. She says that she got her training from singing with the Opera Company of Philadelphia chorus and The Pennsylvania Opera Theater each for 14 years, respectively. She has directed *The Merry Widow*, *Carmen* and *The Barber of Seville* for the Delaware Valley Opera's Summer Opera Festival. In 2001 and 2002, she was director for the Philadelphia Christmas Revels. Although she enjoys directing, Connie primarily considers herself a performer and a voice teacher. She has, however, worked as a costume designer/seamstress, stage manager, make-up artist, props master, group sales manager, set designer/painter and arts educator. Two years ago, Ms. Koppe directed a production of *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Philadelphia Biblical University's opera workshop. Connie holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Music in Opera from Temple University. Since 1980, she has taught arts education workshops in schools in and around Philadelphia and New Jersey for The Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Arts for Anyone, and Storybook Musical Theater. Connie, along with pianist Carla Mariani and bass player Larry Cohen, performed a Cabaret of French Art Song and Cabaret Music at the Hermitage this past spring and will be performing at Temple University's Diamond Club in February. She also costumed a production of *The Gardner's Dog* (04) and *The Hot Mikado* (05) at the University of the Arts.